

Tavern Times

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End of the Year 2005

Note from the Director

The year 2005 was a wonderful combination of success, change and new directions. We had a record number of visitors—over 20,000 children, adults, locals and tourists came through our doors. Two staff members moved away to start new chapters in their lives and we welcomed Molly Sinclair as our new Curator of Education. From the recreation of the 2nd Inaugural Banquet of Thomas Jefferson to the first Annual Great Rum Punch Challenge to the newly established John Yagerline Fall Lecture Series, the public programs were well attended and continued our tradition of making history accessible and fun! The museum's collection grew as several pieces we purchased for the East Bedchamber, making the period room more in line with the 1802 Gadsby inventory. Finally, tremendous progress was made in the primary source research on John Wise and the 1785 tavern.

To continue with last year's tradition, this final newsletter of the year will provide a snapshot of this past year and highlight the exciting year to come. With your help and dedication, we look forward to another great year at Gadsby's Tavern Museum!

Gretchen Bulova

Office of Historic Alexandria Director Retires

Jean Taylor Federico, after 22 years of service to the City of Alexandria, will hang up her Director hat on December 30. Jean has been an exceptional leader and advocate for Alexandria's history, museums, and preservation programs. She is especially proud of the growth of the OHA museum collections and their successful marketing initiatives.



Jean started her career in 1963, teaching at the University of Michigan and then at the University of Maryland. She was Curator and then Director at the DAR Museum in Washington, DC before taking the position of Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria in 1983.

During her tenure with the City of Alexandria, Jean secured the accreditation of three OHA museums by the American Association of Museums—a distinction she is proud of. She was also responsible for raising funds for a variety of OHA exhibits and projects. Jean looks forward to traveling the globe and spending more time with her grandchildren.

Historic Alexandria Candlelight Tours

December 10 5:00 - 9:00 p.m.

On December 10th, make Candlelight Tours a part of this year's holiday experience. The area's premier holiday event features period music, seasonal decorations and special costumed tours at Carlyle House Historic Park, Gadsby's Tavern Museum, and the Lee-Fendall House. The ticket price is \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors, and \$5 for children. Purchase

tickets online at www.HistoricAlexandria.org or by calling the Museum.



Volunteer for Candlelight Tours!

Sign up today to give costumed stationed tours, promote museum shop sales, or pass out refreshments.

Help Deck the Halls of Gadsby's Tavern Museum on Wednesday, December 7th. Bring your gloves, garden shears, and your creativity. Enjoy cider and the great company of your fellow Gadsby volunteers between 10 a.m. and noon. Greenery welcome—holly, magnolia, and more!

**We hope to see you at
Gadsby's Tavern Museum during the holidays!**



Ask Provey: Museum Questions Answered

Dear Provey - What exciting developments occurred over the past year with the collection—both objects and building?

The museum acquired three pieces over the past year, all wonderful additions to the collection and important to the museum's interpretation. Based on the Gadsby inventory of 1802, a “looking glass” was purchased for the East Bedchamber using funds donated in honor of Paul Garver, former Assistant Director. In addition, a ca. 1800 pearlware teapot and ca. 1795 pearlware creamer were purchased to enhance the East Bedchamber's interpretation. We were pleased to purchase these important pieces of ceramics in honor of former Curator of Education Andrea West and Special Event Coordinator Kirsten Doescher.

The most important object in the collection is our building of course. This year, we focused on the protection and repair of the original 1785 Assembly Room floor. The repair process took several month as historic woodwork expert Christopher Owens painstakingly worked on the floor using 18th century techniques. Just in time for the fall, Christopher stained new southern heart pine floor boards to match the original floor - as close as possible. Other exciting news - after anxiously waiting for several months, the preliminary findings of a new dendrochronology study confirmed the 1792 construction date of the City Tavern and Hotel. Our Tavern buildings were constructed under the direction of John Wise in 1785 and 1791-92.

Year of Programs

From children's programs to re-enactments, 2005 was a great year for the programs at Gadsby's. In February, Gadsby's helped coordinate the George Washington 10K Race to start off President's Day weekend. And later that night, the Birthnight Ball was a lively evening full of historic characters, guests, and sailors from the USS Alexandria.

Celebrating the landslide victory of Thomas Jefferson, a banquet was held in his honor in the historic Ballroom in March. Bill Barker of Colonial Williamsburg played Jefferson with great distinction and dazzled the over 70 people in attendance. And celebrating the tavern's most popular drink—rum punch—the 1st Annual Great Rum Punch Challenge was held in May.

The 10th Annual Costume Symposium was a huge success, as over 100 people from across the country came to learn about jewelry, silks, hairstyles and the proper way to measure a man. A 1770's sackback dress was even created in a day!

The 18th Century and Civil War Balls continued to grow and attract a wider audience for the museum. And over 1,000 children were entertained and educated through the museum's variety of programming—Tavern overnights, History Hunters and Swordmen's Rendevous, birthday parties, and Children's Day.



Gadsby's in Print and News

Thanks to the generous donation from the Society, the Museum was able to advertise in a variety of places to get the word out about the many aspects of the museum. From *The Scouter Digest* to *WHERE Magazine* to a new group tour brochure, all helped bring in a *record* number of guests to programs and regular tours.

Many of the museum's programs were also written up in the local papers. The Alexandria Gazette highlighted the Jefferson Banquet and Rum Punch Challenge while the Washington Post focused on our birthday party program.

Gadsby's also worked with Alexandria's Convention and Visitors Association throughout the year. In June, the museum was a major part of their “Of Pubs and Patriots” press weekend and in October, the Museum hosted “Toast the Ghosts”, their yearly client event for over 100 meeting planners and hospitality staff.

Passing of a Friend

On April 7, friends and family said a final farewell to John Yagerline. John had been a fixture in the City of Alexandria and at Gadsby's Tavern Museum for many years. As Alexandria's official Town Crier since 1998, part of his duties included serving as the master of ceremonies for Alexandria's 250th birthday celebration. Here at Gadsby's, John loved to give tours and help with special events.



In honor of his love for spreading the word, the *John Yagerline Lecture Series* was established this past fall with resounding success. Topics ranged from George Washington's leadership to Graveyard Art. Contributions to the John Yagerline Fund will be continuously accepted to support the fall series.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

Thank you to the following volunteers who helped us through the busy fall season:

Thank you to *Jim Williams, Kathy Kelly, and Jeanette Smith* for assisting with a **group tour**. And *Lilian Silveira, Ellen Stanton, and Mary Underhill* who continue to do a fantastic job teaching the many **school programs**.

Thanks to *Connie Nelson* and *Cathy Zaret* for **sewing** new napkins and pillowcases. We still have more napkins if you have some time to spare!

This year's **Halloween tours** were a great success due to the efforts of *Dee and Chuck Cardiff, David Groome, Kerry McClure, Cathy Zaret, Chuck Aldrich, Pam Budde, Millie Nash, Peggy Harlow, Nancy Marchetti, Jim Williams, Charlie Davis, Kathleen Fitzgerald, Geoff Williams, Annmarie Lawrence, and Mary Kirk Meneffee*

Lucinda Buker, Erin Gallalee, and Pat Sowers assisted with our Girl Scout **Overnight** and *Erin Gallalee, and Pat Sowers* also worked with many excited boys and girls at **Birthday Parties**.

Thanks to *Helen Anderson, Ted Borek, Bonnie Fairbank, and Cathy Zaret* for the **Virginia Living magazine shoot** to promote Gadsby's Tavern Museum. Be sure to check out the newstand in January!

Mary Geraghty and *Sue Westendorf* helped prepare kids for the holidays at **History Hunters**. And *Johnny & Charlie Anderson, Taylor Craig, Erin Gallalee, David Groome, Kathy Kelly, Annemarie Lawrence, Peter Ryan, and Cathy Zaret* educated and amazed more than 300 local scouts and children during the **Swordsmen's Rendezvous**.

Looking Ahead to 2006

Yes, the weather is turning colder, which means the new year is right around the corner! Great things are already perking for the upcoming year. Please mark your calendar for the upcoming exciting events and volunteer opportunities!

- Starting in January, Gretchen Bulova will be co-teaching the class, *Historic House Museums: Who, What, When, Why, and How*, for the George Washington University Museum Studies program. Seventeen students will be learning the ins and outs of everything from collections management to fund-raising.
- Based on the findings from research this past summer, a clearer biographical profile of John Wise will be available.
- In January/February, head to your local newsstand and pick up *Virginia Living*. There you will find an article (and some amazing photos) about taverns in Virginia, highlighting Gadsby's.
- Join us **February 18** for the annual Birthnight Banquet and Ball. Set in the year 1799, don't miss out on this amazing Alexandria tradition.
- Just as patrons did over 200 years ago, enjoy rum punch, great food and a silent auction at the **2nd Annual Rum Punch Challenge March 11**. Vote on your favorite punch and at the end of the night, the coveted ribbon will be awarded. A fun evening not to be missed!
- The Gadsby staff will be helping to guide the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum in its interpretive and marketing program as it reopens to the public. Help from our great, smart volunteers will be needed in the future.
- Enjoy a beautiful time in Old Town Alexandria on **April 29 – The Alexandria Association's Annual "Spring Event."** This year, the Spring Event benefits Gadsby's Tavern Museum and many volunteers will be needed to help organize this annual house tour.
- The city is looking into moving forward with the final phase of replacing the HVAC system. Funds have already been allocated from Save American's Treasures and other grants are currently pending to match this. Also discussions will begin on repairing the ballroom floor.



Calendar of Events

Candlelight Tours

December 10

Birthnight Ball Dance Classes

February 2, 9, 16

Holiday Party

December 15

Swordsmen's Rendezvous

February 11

Civil War Ball Dance Classes

January 12, 19, 26

History Hunters

February 12

Civil War Ball

January 28

Valentine's Day Tours

February 14

Mission Statement

Gadsby's Tavern Museum's programs, collections, and exhibitions create a varied and meaningful learning environment that addresses the needs and interests of our community's residents and visitors. Like the 18th-century purpose of the site, our goal is to play a dynamic role in the social, economic, and educational life of Alexandria, thus contributing to the City's identity and vitality.

GADSBY'S TAVERN MUSEUM

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